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## Re-Surveying Viet Nam

President Johnson is undertaking a "thorough and penetrating review of the many facets of the situation in South Viet Nam", and from this survey he will make decisions on the degree that the United States will further involve itself in the war there. Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara is in the group making the study, and it includes also McGeorge Bundy, the presidential assistant for national security, Admiral William F. Rayburn, the C.I.A. director, Henry Cabot Lodge, the new ambassador, as well as others who have important consulting roles in foreign policy and national defense. One question which will be resolved is how much more manpower the United States will send.

As the discussions begin, a completely unrelated military adventure, the Cuban Bay of Pigs invasion, is being resurrected by biographers of President Kennedy. If anything is to come out of these post mortems of the 1961 failure, it is that the nation cannot put limits on the degree that it will participate in anti-Communist military action. The nation either must stay out of the actions or embark upon them with a determination to use everything necessary to win. With regard to Viet Nam, the lesson may well be that reluctance by the United States has delayed the widest application of military power there. This has contributed to a deterioration which Secretary McNamara cites as having occurred

between his trip there a year ago and the one he made last week.

The biographers of President Kennedy, Theodore C. Sorensen and Arthur M. Schlesinger, jr., the first to present definite analyses of President Kennedy's role in the Bay of Pigs, give clear indication that the late president's doubts may well have reduced any chances of success. Mr. Sorensen quotes the late president as saying, "How could everybody involved have thought such a plan would succeed? How could I have been so far off base? All my life I have known better than to depend on the experts. How could I have been so stupid to let them go ahead?" The limitation on Cuba was that the United States would not overtly participate. There followed other limitations which, when they were all added, provided the reasons for failure. The fundamental decision, therefore, was made by the president who, in limiting the scope of American operations, may have unwittingly foredoomed the plan to free Cuba from Castro.

Whether the decision to free Cuba was a good one or a bad one, just as whether today's decision to free Viet Nam from the Viet Cong is good or bad, is immaterial. Once the decision is made, in each case to free, then there cannot be any limitation or the risk of defeat becomes greater. The original plan for Viet Nam was made a long while ago. The president has decisions he must make now which involve removing all the shackles

on the conduct of the anti-Viet Cong operation. This would involve the removal of any ceilings on manpower, naval power, and air power. It would involve the removal of restrictions on what targets are to be bombed. It would involve the removal of restrictions on weapons. Finally, it would involve the removal of the restriction on the generals and the admirals to fight according to their professional training and experience.

The old quote that war is too serious to leave to the generals may be an eloquent testimonial to free government's leadership, but let it never be forgotten that generals win the battles. The degree in which there is interference, the kind that restricts the warrior, oftentimes is the reason for defeat.